

TENNESSEE-TOMBIGBEE WATERWAY WILDLIFE MITIGATION ALABAMA AND MISSISSIPPI

CONDITION OF IMPROVEMENT ON 30 SEPTEMBER 1998

Existing Project: Section 601 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (WRDA) authorized the plan to mitigate wildlife losses resulting from construction and operation and maintenance of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway (TTW), Alabama and Mississippi. The authorized plan consists of the following components:

(1) Acquisition from willing sellers and then management of 88,000 acres of land, with at least 20,000 acres acquired in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta in Alabama and at least 25,000 acres among the Pascagoula, Pearl, and Mississippi Delta Basins in Mississippi. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) agreed to apportion the remaining 43,000 acres. Selection of land was done in consultation with appropriate State and Federal officials, with emphasis placed on predominantly flood plain forest land to replace the 34,000 acres of bottomland hardwoods lost during construction of the TTW.

(2) Management of existing project lands designated for wildlife mitigation purposes (approximately 72,618 acres at the TTW, approximately 4,270 acres at the Alabama River Lakes, approximately 8,235 acres at Okatibbee Lake, and approximately 7,964 acres at the Black Warrior and Tombigbee Lakes Projects).

(3) The States of Alabama and Mississippi provide for the management of both existing project lands and separable lands. The Corps shall reimburse said States for management and initial develop costs as specified in a plan for management of the mitigation lands (Mitigation Implementation Plans) developed by the Secretary of the Army, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the States of Alabama and Mississippi.

Progress:

Existing Project Lands. In March 1997, the Mobile District completed the Mitigation Implementation Plan (MIP) for the Existing Project Lands Increment. Separate MIPs will be proposed for each separable increment of mitigation lands. These plans provide an overview of the initial development and maintenance costs to implement the wildlife management program. The MIPs are being developed in coordination with the FWS, ADCNR and MDWFP. To implement the provisions of the WRDA and MIP the Corps and States entered into real estate licenses.

Land Acquisition. Alabama - With acquisition beginning in 1990 a total of 33,474 acres have been purchased in Alabama. This includes 21,182 acres for the Mobile-Tensaw Delta Increment, 2,463 acres in the vicinity of the TTW Project, and 9,829 acres in Lowndes County, Alabama.

Mississippi - A total of 54,035 acres have been acquired in Mississippi. This includes 39,630 acres acquired for the Pascagoula, Pearl and Mississippi Delta Increment. Of this acreage, 13,433 acres were bought in the Pascagoula River Basin, 18,542 acres in the Mississippi River Delta and 7,655 acres in the Nanih Waiya area of the Pearl River Basin. In Northeast Mississippi, an additional 14,405 acres were acquired in the vicinity of the TTW Project.

Thus, a total of 87,509 acres have been acquired in Alabama and Mississippi as of 30 September 1998, for the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Wildlife Mitigation Project. The remaining 491 acres are scheduled for acquisition in 1999.

Scheduled Completion. Project land acquisition and implementation of initial development activities on existing and separable lands are scheduled for completion in September 1999.

Cost through 30 September 1998: \$91,158,837.